

## DASHING WOMEN OPERATE LOVE SYNDICATE IN NEW YORK

WINSOME "WIDOW'S" SPIDER WEB CAUGHT ONE HUNDRED RICH DUPES WHO WALKED INTO IT WILLINGLY.

One of the Victims Told His Story to the District Attorney and the Syndicate Came to an Untimely End—Secured \$100,000 While It Worked.

New York.—If Robert Emmet Keene, actor, wit and adviser in the court of love operated by Mrs. Izella Brown and Mrs. George T. Verrault, had not used bad judgment and let James V. MacClellan, the obscure Philadelphia grocer, into the West Seventy-third street mansion, all the fuss about the love syndicate might have been avoided. It was Keene who used to determine which of the eager applicants for love honor should come in. When he passed favorably upon MacClellan he let in the man who, when ruthlessly rejected by the charming Mrs. Verrault, promptly went to the United States district attorney.

The extent to which the love syndicate operated has amazed the district attorney. It is calculated that in the three years during which the combine ensnared its victims more than \$100,000 was taken from them. A census of the dupes shows that they range from prosperous store owners to millionaire Wall street financiers. Probably one hundred of them walked into the spider web.

Four women figured in the active work of the love trust. Mrs. Brown, shrewd and fascinating, was the schemer who kept the syndicate afloat. Mrs. Verrault was the official letter writer. It was she who sent the captivating love missives that won the hearts of the susceptible dupes. She attended to the correspondence of both herself and Mrs. Brown.

### Daughter and Niece

The golden-haired daughter of Mrs. Brown was a conspicuous member of the combination. She did not make love to any of the men nor receive their attentions, but it was handy to have her around as milady's maid. The same interesting role was assumed by Mrs. Brown's beautiful niece, Miss Mary Mason. To the credit of Mrs. Brown, it may be said that she watched these two damsels with the eye of a hawk and never permitted the slightest indiscretion so far as they were concerned. The two girls when not engaged in the palace of love had the time of their lives in going about the country with Mrs. Brown.

The niece is the daughter of a struggling Boston storekeeper. He always held a high regard for his sister, and feeling that she could provide his daughter with better advan-

ter Lillian. It is said they are engaged to be married.

### Dashing Leading Spirit

Mrs. Brown, the guiding spirit of the love enterprise, is forty-two years old and has had a kaleidoscopic career. Her deep hazel eyes have a bewitching and dangerous softness. She has a subtle grace and dignity. Her hair is of the blazing peroxide variety. Tall and with a strikingly symmetrical figure, she is a woman who would immediately attract attention. There is a shrewd cast in her countenance, but it is tempered by the melting languor of her eyes.

It is easy to see from an observation of Mrs. Brown how she was able to hold men in her clutches. She is a woman of keen wit, a brisk conversationalist and one quick to take advantage of every slight opportunity. With her suitors she has been by turns affectionate, adoring, gracious and stern. She has a heart of steel, but her admirers never suspected it until they were violently jilted.

Mrs. Verrault is a woman of a softer type. Her deep dark eyes, rosy complexion and beautifully moulded face give her an atmosphere of dazzling charm. She is scarcely past thirty, yet she has broken hearts galore. Her chestnut-brown tresses contribute to her bewitching beauty. In manner she is the opposite of Mrs. Brown. She is at once impulsive, sunning and lovable. It is said that Mrs. Verrault actually fell in love with a few of her admirers, but she held herself in check because to love was not one of the principles of the extraordinary matrimonial syndicate. All her witcheries and graceful tricks of manner and speech were put forth to lead her victims on to their doom.

### Youths Helped Along the Game of Cupid.

The youths who helped along the tricks of the love trust were scarcely out of their teens. Robert Emmet Keene, who for some time played small parts in Proctor's stock company, was the oldest of the group. He was quick to see the opportunity offered by the matrimonial enterprise when first he was introduced into the household. Promptly giving up his stage career, he entered into the affairs of the syndicate with all the fervor of his ardent spirit.

In his position as butler many a

skyrocket company exploded, leaving a large number of financiers holding bogus stock, Angell felt like trouncing his son-in-law, but never could find him.

This chimerical concern procured its victims by advertising in newspapers and also through the means of the spiritualistic seances that were a part of the matrimonial plans.

### Matrimonial Mansion Was

Elaborately Fitted Out.

The matrimonial mansion was fitted out in a way calculated to inspire the dupes. Each room has a name according to the kind of paper on the wall. The parlor was the green room, because it had green paper with little splashes of pink. The library was furnished in red. All the books were of red. The library cost Mrs. Brown \$15,000.

Mrs. Brown had a red room on the third floor which harmonized with her blond hair. Mrs. Verrault's boudoir was of a delicate pink.

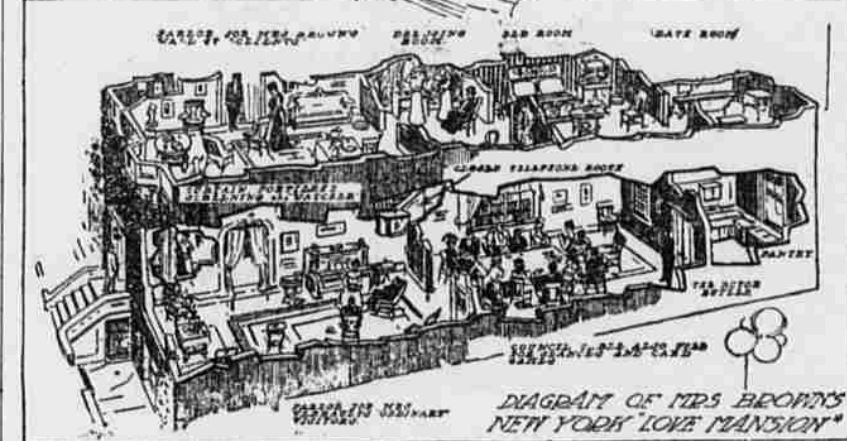
Mrs. Verrault and Mrs. Brown were always very careful about receiving

the most annoyance by the persistency of his infatuation was Kiesler. He would not hesitate to make love anywhere. He showered kisses as well as presents upon Mrs. Verrault. When dining out he could not restrain himself in falling upon his knees at her feet and kissing her hand. He would write the most crushing love letters of all the group of infatuated dupes.

"I find myself speaking your name when I awake," he would write, and then go into raptures over her beauty.

The burning love missives were a source of much merriment at the daily cabinet sessions of the love troupe. Actor Keene would read them with the greatest gusto and accentuate the most tender passages. Keen said the letters could be made into a thrilling love drama, and he had a good mind to do it himself.

The Wall street broker, F. J. Syme, whose name was used in connection with the fuel scheme, was an unwilling victim, it is said, of the syndicate. He fell in with the fuel idea, believing that the company had acres of fertile



their guests. Each of the women would have three men a week calling upon them. If Mrs. Brown had a suitor who seemed to be particularly recalcitrant about buying extravagant presents, Mrs. Verrault, who was always able to corral the most obstreperous caller, would be called in to use her persuasive influence.

Mrs. Verrault used to go out often than Mrs. Brown with the infatuated lovers. She would always wear a heavy veil and would tell her spell-bound admirer that she did it to keep her wicked brothers from seeing her. These relatives, she said, were always trying to make trouble for her. They were scheming to get part of the estate left her by the rich husband she said had died. Often when out with one suitor dining at a fashionable cafe she would be startled to find another sweetheart sitting idly at a nearby table. She would then hurry the dinner through on pretense of feeling faint and would hasten home with her escort.

### Ingenuity Exercised in

Receiving the Infatuated. Both "widows" had to exercise some ingenuity in receiving the society women whom they had on their string. These members of the "400" they met through the medium of advertisements, and used them as a means of getting unlimited credit for expensive dresses. They had to arrange it so that these fashionables would call in the afternoon, for at night the parlors were given up to the explicit use of the love victims.

There were many exciting scenes at the front doors of the establishment run by the syndicate on West Seventy-third street and later at No. 323 West Eighty-second street. Disappointed lovers who had handed over to the syndicate much of their money used to storm on the front stoop and threaten to dynamite the mansion if their lady love would not see them. Robert Emmet Keene was quite diplomatic in handling these excited individuals and managed to save the house of love from an explosion.

The parlor in which the lovelorn admirers were received had a massive mantel adorned with gold ornaments. Upon it would be placed photographs of the callers, particular care being taken that the right picture was in the right place for the occasion. Count Zolnow, the Fifth avenue delicatessen dealer, had his photograph taken in 57 different styles and would insist that Mrs. Verrault, whom he was courting, should have them all in plain evidence around the room.

"Don't you think I take a good picture?" he would ask.

"You're the sweetest thing in the world," Mrs. Verrault would reply. Then she would get the promise of another expensive present.

The old man who caused Mrs. Ver-

land in Kentucky. He called at the love palace many times to get pointers about fuel. It is said that the broker invested considerable money in the scheme.

### Mrs. Verrault Had

a Real Love Affair.

Among the real love affairs that Mrs. Verrault was interested in was one with a Boston lawyer. She was greatly attached to him. One day after he had failed to call around and see her at her Boston home she went to his office and created a scene. The lawyer ordered her out. The next day Mrs. Verrault was taken to a hospital. Her nerves were all unstrung and it was alleged she had taken bichloride of mercury in an effort to end her life.

McClellan, the Philadelphia, has been quite upset because of the fuss he has caused in having his erstwhile sweetheart arrested. The next day after Mrs. Verrault appeared in court MacClellan came to town and telephoned to the West Eighty-second street mansion. He got Mrs. Brown on the phone and told her he was sorry he had caused all the trouble. If Mrs. Verrault would return the presents he had lavished upon her he would withdraw the charge.

"Go on, you fool!" was the snappy reply. "Mrs. Verrault doesn't care what you do."

MacClellan, the picture of despair, hung about the house seeking a chance to speak to his lady love, but when Mrs. Verrault emerged from the mansion she swept by him as though he didn't exist.

### The Philadelphia Lover

Kicked Over the Tracks

The wall of all the overturned suitors has been that they lost so much money. It is this very thing that has given Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Verrault such keen delight. In one of her merry moods Mrs. Verrault said:

"What a fine spectacle this is, all these men having me arrested because I was too sharp for them! They are fortune-hunters, and of a very low type. They are like the foreign noblemen who come over here to win rich American girls, but they go it on a cheap scale. They think the American women soft, and all they have to do is to look wall-eyed at them and they will break their necks to hand them money. They only called because they wanted to get homes where they wouldn't have to work. I really think that I have done a service to American women in showing these brutes up."

It is.

"Gee! I had rotten luck to-day!" "John, don't you think 'rotten' is a rather rotten word for a father of a family to use?"—Houston Post.



## HE AFFECTS A COMPROMISE.

"Barney," said Mrs. Barney Flynn, as the policeman settled himself for a smoke.

"Present," returned Policeman Flynn, absent-mindedly saluting.

"Ha-ave ye a minute to spare?"

"I ha-ave tin iv thim," answered Policeman Flynn.

"'Twill be enough," said Mrs. Flynn. "I wisht ye'd run nixt door an' arrist Mrs. Dugan."

"'Er why?" asked Policeman Flynn, looking at her in astonishment. "Did she give ye the cold shate whin ye passed her be th' corner, or did she tell th' neighbors ye was wearin' a hat iv laast year's crop?"

"Ha-ave a little sinse about ye, Barney," returned Mrs. Flynn, indignantly. "She do be pillin' ashes ferninst th' face, where they blows over an' ruins the wor'rk iv a day's washin'. I ha-ave th' clo'es hung out to dhray, an' whin I take thim in me best white pillecoat luks like a polky-dot dhrass."

"Why don't ye wear it fr' wan?" demanded Policeman Flynn, pertinently. "'Twd be money saved."

"Barney, are ye a fool?" asked Mrs. Flynn, warmly. "Will ye arrist that woman or will ye not?"

"'Tis th' first time I ever knew ye c'dn't hold up yer own ind with anny wan," replied Policeman Flynn, evasively. "If they was fool to wan, 'tw'd be diff'rint; but with wan to wan I niver knew ye to back down."

"Back down, is it?" cried Mrs. Flynn. "Sure, ye bether not say that more than wanst. Back down! Oh, me! Oh, my! G'wan over an' ask Mrs. Dugan if I backed down. I give her as good as she give me lvery time. D'ye think I ha-ave no tongue in me head to let th' likes iv her come over me?"

"I know ye ha-ave," said Policeman Flynn, with feeling. "But, accordin' to yer own shtory, 'tis an akeel thing."

"'Tis not, if ye're a ma-an," asserted Mrs. Flynn; "if ye're not, thim I've me know it. 'Tis an akeel thing bechune her an' me, with me havin' a little th' best iv it; but her ma-an do be a dhriver an' not a policeman. 'Er why are ye on th' force? 'Er th' protection iv thim as needs it. If ye'll not shand up fr' me, I might as well be marr'd to a hod-caryer."

"Mrs. Flynn," said the patrolman, impressively, "there's wan thing I'd like fr' to tell ye. 'Tis me that niver shir-ried me juty. I've been ferninst the wor-st that iver come down th' pla-ank-r-road. I've tuk three min to the station to wanst, an' I've kep' order illection day in th' ha-ardst district in th' city. I've tuk th' con min an' th' strong-arm min an' the wor-st characters that iver was put behind th' bars, but I niver wint up ferninst a woman in a clo'es-line fight, an' I niver will while I ha-ave me

sonal interest had a tendency to pervert her views.

"'Twd be a fine thing," went on Policeman Flynn, "fr' me to go ma-archin' to th' station with me wife an' me neighbor's wife. Oh! I think I see meself. 'What's th' charge?' says th' judge. 'Disord'ly conduct,' says I. 'What's they been doin'?' says I. 'Jawin' each other over th' face,' says I, 'disturbin' lvery wan in th' block. Me wife, I says, 'tells me neighbor's wife her father was sint back be th' immigrations officials fr' th' reason he's wanted fr' shtearlin' a pig, an' me neighbor's wife tells me own wife that her brother's dodgin' th' polls now. An'



from that they go to callin' ha-ard names an' vi-latin' th' law. 'Twd be a gr-reat sight, it w'd that."

"Ye c'dn't arrist me fr' that," asserted Mrs. Flynn.

"'Er why?"

"'Er because I'm a po-lis-man's wife," was the confident reply, and then, considering that matter settled, she returned to the charge. "I'll tell ye what, Barney Flynn," she said, "ye'll make that woman ha-ave a civil tongue in her head, or ye'll ha-ave no hot coffee waitin' fr' ye whin ye come home anny more. If ye'er cow'rdly nature won't let ye ta-alk to th' woman, go lam her ma-an wanst, just to let thim know ye're shandin' up fr' th' rights iv yer wife."

"M-m-m, well," replied Policeman Flynn, apparently brought to terms by this threat, "if ye insist, I'll ha-ave it out with him. They's no ma-an walks that I'm afraid to go ferninst, but a woman—" He ended the sentence with a shake of his head.

"Give it to him good," urged Mrs. Flynn. "She's been threat'nin' to tell him to knock yer head off. Give it to him in th' neck."

"'Tis there I aim to put it," said Policeman Flynn.

The matter being thus settled, nothing remained but to carry out the plan, and Policeman Flynn straightway hunted up Dugan. They shook hands in a guarded sort of way, like two watchful prizefighters, and then the policeman remarked, casually: "Th' good woman do be ha-avin' some wor-ords with ye-b' wife."

"I heard iv it," replied Dugan, at for a minute they eyed each other suspiciously.

"'Tis a sha-ame to ha-ave quar'ls bechune fr'nds," asserted Policeman Flynn, finally. "If ye'll put a br-ake on yer wife's tongue I'll do th' same be mine."

"If ye'll ha-ave yer wife keep her clapper shillit," returned Dugan, "I'll ha-ave th' ashpile changed."

"'Tis done," responded Policeman Flynn, promptly. "Will ye ha-ave a bit iv th' ol' shuff at Hogan's ba-arr?"

"I will."

When Policeman Flynn reached home he announced that the ashes thereafter would be dumped elsewhere. "But don't mention it," he cautioned. "Don't say a word to Mrs. Dugan. Poor la-ard, I'm sorry fr' him, an' they's no use r-rubb'in' it in."

"What did ye do to him?" asked Mrs. Flynn.

"I give it to him," answered the patrolman, "first in th' mouth an' thin in th' neck." And he added to himself: "It wint down that wa-y, fr' I saw it go."

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### Poets in Parliament.

The candidacy of the comic playwright, Tristan Bernard, for a seat in the French chamber recalls the facts that within a decade only one poet of repute—Maurice Barres—has been a member of a parliamentary body, and that Lamartine was the only eminent poet who was also a great political orator. The younger Dumas was once asked why he did not try for a seat in the chamber of deputies, to advocate his ideas of divorce. He replied that he might fare like the editor Emile de Girardin, who one day was violently attacked in an assembly. He rushed on the tribunal with furious men and everybody was eager to hear his answer. He glared for a moment at his tribunal and then exclaimed in stentorian tones: "I shall answer you to-morrow in my journal."—N. Y. Post.



A VICTIM, WORTH "LOVING"—FOOLISH, BUT RICH.

tages than he was able to afford sent her to New York. Mrs. Brown's scheme to marry the girl to a New Yorker of wealth was given a rude shock when the girl eloped with a man she really loved. She met her husband while attending a regimental ball to which Mrs. Brown had taken her.

Gregory Allen, who was one of the butlers in the Brown-Verrault household, knew this young man and introduced him to the blue-eyed beauty. It was love at first sight. Three months from the day of the meeting Miss Mason broke away from the influence of the love combine. Gregory Allen had been very much smitten with Miss Mason himself. When she jilted him he got bravely over it and fell in love with Mrs. Brown's daugh-

ter Lillian. It is said they are engaged to be married.

George Mason was one of the promoters of the famous Kentucky Fiel and Alcohol company, which was one of the side issues of the syndicate. He made his father-in-law, William D. Angell, of Chicago, vice president of the concern without asking the old gentleman's consent. When the